

August 30th 2014

Weakened and Impoverished

We entered the fourth week of displacement. Yet, there is nothing promising at all. The Iraqi government has not done anything to regain the Christian towns back from the IS. Likewise, the Kurdish government, apart from allowing us to enter their province, has not offered any aid, financial or material, leaving us in the streets, and making the church take full responsibility of us all. Thanks to the Church of Iraq in Kurdistan, who opened their halls and centres to provide shelters. Yet, the number of refugees was so large that the Kurdish government had to face the stark reality and open their schools to provide additional shelter for refugees.

We hear a lot about world governments and organizations sending financial aid to Iraq, but the refugee gets the least –we do not know or understand why. People lost almost everything; they cannot even afford to buy milk or formula for their children. What saddens us most is that, only one month ago, these people were the most educated in the country and among those most likely to build a life for themselves and their family, and now they do not have enough money in their pockets to survive the day. Christians became accustomed to investing their money in businesses, shops, fields, buildings...etc, to build their communities. Leaving their towns meant leaving everything they had been working for all their lives. Yet, amidst losing everything, accepting their lost dignity, is the most difficult loss they may experience. Some have found shelter in tents, others in schools, still others in church halls and gardens. They wait to be fed, or given food to cook; elderly are not being taken care of properly; children are living in unhealthy conditions; families have lost their privacy; women are exposed in these places; men have no jobs in a culture where a man is expected to support his families. Refusing to live without dignity, more and more people think of immigrating. Whoever owns a car or gold, sells them to buy a plane ticket out of the country. Needless to say, the buyers in Kurdistan are taking advantage and do not take into consideration the devastation these refugees face.

Christians in Iraq are known for their faithfulness and peaceful way of living among others. They do not believe in violence or in war as a way to solve problems. Now, they feel that they are victims because other religions and political parties are dividing the country on the account of the innocent.

Of course, none of us is a political analyst, but it is obvious that Kurdistan is the only beneficiary: economically, militarily, and provincially, while they were obliged to protect the Nineveh Plain. The Peshmerga pulled out of the plain of Nineveh in no time, without a clear reason, and without warning the civilians; we knew we were living in a war zone, when we trusted that at the very least, in a time of danger, they will warn us but, did not –so how can we trust them now (government and people)?

We still wonder why the world cannot petition the UN to take serious action toward the IS, and save the people from their misery, knowing that the IS is the most dangerous group in the world. Is the world deaf and blind? People are almost convinced that the only way out of this crisis is to immigrate and leave the country, if it is even possible. It is certain, many have reached their breaking point and despair is setting in. Maybe immigrating is the only way to stop living in such a catastrophic humanitarian crisis. People cannot endure this persecution, marginalization, contempt, and rejection anymore. If there is any other way, besides immigration, please let us know. Otherwise, please help people get out of the country, by seeking asylum, according to the UN law.

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